



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

MN
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/921,224	08/01/2001	Matthias Breuer	30014200-1007	5926
58328 7590 07/16/2007 SONNENSCHN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP FOR SUN MICROSYSTEMS P.O. BOX 061080 WACKER DRIVE STATION, SEARS TOWER CHICAGO, IL 60606-1080			EXAMINER STORK, KYLE R	
			ART UNIT 2178	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 07/16/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

MAILED

Application Number: 09/921,224
Filing Date: August 01, 2001
Appellant(s): BREUER, MATTHIAS

JUL 16 2007

Technology Center 2100

Christopher P. Rauch
Reg. No. 45,034
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed 6 March 2007 appealing from the Office
action mailed 20 April 2006.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The examiner is not aware of any related appeals, interferences, or judicial proceedings which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

5339410	Kanai	8-1994
6006239	Bhansali et al.	12-1999

Art Unit: 2178

6691281	Sorge et al.	2-2004
6185582	Zellweger et al.	2-2001

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-6 and 8-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kanai (US 5339410, patented 16 August 1994) and further in view of Bhansali et al. (US 6006239, patented 21 December 1999, hereafter Bhansali).

In regard to independent claim 1, Kanai discloses a method in data processing system for enabling a user to input data into a document comprising cells arranged in columns and rows, a first of the cells and a second of the cells each having an original content, the method comprising the steps of:

- Overriding, without deleting, the original content of the first cell with a first user inputted value, the first cell keeping the original content of the first cell in the first cell while the original content is overridden (column 1, line 66- column 2, line 4; column 4, lines 17-25: Here, a first cell containing a formula (variable value cell)

has the formula overridden by an input value. However, the formula is maintained (not changed))

- Recalculating the cells based on the first user inputted value (column 4, lines 17-34: Here, the corresponding cells that rely on the value of the first cell are recalculated)

Kanai fails to specifically disclose:

- After recalculating the cells based on the first user input value, overriding, without deleting, the original content of the second cell with a second user inputted value, the second cell keeping the original content of the second cell in the second cell while the original content of the second cell is overridden
- Recalculating the cells based on the second user inputted value

However, as disclosed above, Kanai discloses recalculating cells based on an inputted override value without deleting the original content of a cell (column 1, line 66-column 2, line 4; column 4, lines 17-34). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have perform Kanai's method multiple times, since it would have allowed a user to easily produce a multiple direction calculation model based upon the relation of cell values (Kanai: column 2, lines 5-14).

Kanai further fails to specifically disclose keeping original content with overridden data. However, Bhansali discloses keeping original content with overridden data and the method for restoring original content (column 3, lines 28-40). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have

combined Kanai with Bhansali's method, since it would have allowed a user to undo undesirable changes to data (Bhansali: column 3, lines 28-40).

In regard to dependent claim 2, Kanai discloses wherein the document is a spreadsheet document and the steps of the method are performed by a spreadsheet program (column 1, lines 64-66).

In regard to dependent claim 3, Kanai discloses wherein the step of recalculating the cells based on the first user inputted value comprises automatically recalculating each cell which contains a reference to the ... and wherein the step of recalculating the cells based on the second user inputted value comprises automatically recalculating each cell which contains a reference to the second cell (column 1, line 67- column 2, line 4).

In regard to dependent claim 4, Kanai discloses providing to the user an option for selecting the first cell to input the first user inputted value; and providing to the user an option for inputting the first user inputted value (column 1, lines 67- column 2, line 4).

In regard to dependent claim 5, Kanai discloses storing the first user inputted data as a last result of a formula of the first cell (column 1, line 67- column 2, line 4). Kanai further discloses setting a flag of the first cell to indicate that the stored last result of the first cell is valid; and setting a flag of each cell which references the first cell to indicate that the stored last result of each cell which references the first cell is invalid (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50: Here, the M-cell has a mark associated with it, to show that the cell recalculation has been performed).

In regard to dependent claim 6, Kanai discloses recalculating each cell (column 4, lines 17-34). Kanai discloses for each cell being recalculated, determining whether the flag is set to valid (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50); when it is determined that the flag is not set to valid, recalculating the last result of the cell to produce a new value (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50); replacing the last result with the new value such that the new value becomes the last result (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50); and setting the flag to valid; and using the last result for the recalculation. (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50).

In regard to independent claim 8, the applicant discloses the data processing system for the execution of the method of claim 1. Claim 8 is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claims 9 and 12, claim 9 and 12 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 2 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 10, Kanai discloses a formula; a last result of the formula (column 4, lines 17-34). Kanai fails to disclose a flag indicating a validity of the last result. Kanai further discloses a flag indicating a validity of the last result (column 5, line 49- column 6, line 50).

In regard to independent claim 11, claim 11 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 1 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 13, claim 13 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 3 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 14, claim 14 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 4 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 15, claim 15 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 5 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 16, claim 16 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 6 and is rejected along the same rationale.

Claims 7 and 17-18 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sorge et al. (US 6691281, filed 15 June 1999, herein after Sorge) and further in view of Zellweger et al. (US 6185582, filed 17 June 1998, herein after Zellweger) and further in view of Bhansali.

In regard to independent claim 7, Sorge discloses receiving a plurality of values for a plurality of the cells (Sorge Col 4 Lines 10-20 i.e. a plurality of cells receiving data); and storing the values in the last result of the plurality of the cells such that the values are used during recalculation instead of the formulas and such that the plurality of the cells can be restored independently of other of the plurality of cells. (Sorge Col 4 Lines 10-20 i.e. recalculating data inserted in the cells and Col 6 Lines 5-22 i.e. user input recalculated Col 4 Lines 10-20 i.e. a plurality of cells receiving data and Sorge Col 6 Lines 22-37 i.e. data is stored and Col 10 Lines 45-57).

Sorge does not specifically mention the table having a plurality of cells such as a first and second cell. However, Zellweger mentions a first and second cell (Zellweger Col 5 Lines 20-37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply

Zellweger to Sorge, providing Zellweger the benefit of having a first and second cell so the information in the first cell can be replaced with data from the second cell.

Sorge also fails to specifically disclose maintaining the formulas stored within cells so that these formulas can be restored. However, Bhansali discloses restoring data in cells, some of the data being formulas (column 3, lines 28-40).). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have combined Sorge and Zellweger's method with Bhansali's method, since it would have allowed a user to undo undesirable changes to data (Bhansali: column 3, lines 28-40).

In regard to dependent claim 17, claim 17 reflects similar subject matter claimed in claim 7 and is rejected along the same rationale.

In regard to dependent claim 18, Sorge discloses a first storage area that stores a formula; and a second storage area that stores a numerical value that temporarily overrides the formula so that the numerical value is used instead of the formula during recalculation. (Sorge Col 4 Lines 9-37 i.e. storage which stores information such as the formula calculation)

Sorge does not specifically mention the table having a plurality of cells such as a first and second cell. However, Zellweger mentions a first and second cell (Zellweger Col 5 Lines 20-37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply Zellweger to Sorge, providing Zellweger the benefit of having a first and second cell so the information in the first cell can be replaced with data from the second cell.

Sorge also fails to specifically disclose maintaining the formulas stored within cells so that these formulas can be restored. However, Bhansali discloses restoring data in cells, some of the data being formulas (column 3, lines 28-40). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention to have combined Sorge and Zellweger's method with Bhansali's method, since it would have allowed a user to undo undesirable changes to data (Bhansali: column 3, lines 28-40).

(10) Response to Argument

The appellant presents three arguments in response to the examiner's rejection of claims 1-18 under 35 USC 103. The first argument is based upon the appellant's belief that with respect to claims 1, 8, and 11, the prior art of record fails to disclose or suggest automatically restoring an overridden value in a cell (page 6). The appellant states that Kanai "deletes the content of a cell when a new value is written into the cell (page 7)." This is then followed by the example, "when the value in cell X2 is changed, the value in cell Y automatically changes (page 7)." The appellant argues that teaches deleting the value in cell Y. However, the appellant's claim does not language does not require that cell values remain unmodified upon inputting data into the first cell. In fact, the appellant's claim language specifically states, "recalculating the cells based on the first use inputted value (claim 1, line 7)." Therefore, the argument that the inputted value in a first cell causes the value of another cell to change is not persuasive.

The appellant then focuses upon the belief that Bhansali fails to disclose the ability to restore overridden cell values (page 8). The examiner respectfully disagrees. Bhansali discloses a disk undo log (column 3, lines 28-40). Bhansali discloses the method for resolving conflicts between cell modifications (Figure 8). In the event that a cell content has been changed and is in conflict with original data, Bhansali discloses the method of resolving the conflicts and restoring the original content to cells independent of other modified cells (Figure 8; column 10, line 30- column 12, line 58). Therefore, this argument is not persuasive.

The appellant's second argument is based upon the belief that the prior art of record with respect to claims 7 and 17 fails to disclose or suggest a cell comprising a formula and a last result, wherein the value stored in the last result is used to recalculate the cell instead of the formula (page 8). However, the examiner respectfully disagrees. Sorge discloses receiving a plurality of values for a plurality of cells (column 4, lines 10-20). Sorge further discloses storing the values in the last result of the plurality of the cells such that the values are used during recalculation instead of the formulas (column 4, 10-20; column 6, lines 5-22: Here, a user input results in recalculated values; column 6, lines 22-37: Here, the user data is stored; column 10, lines 45-57).

The appellant's final argument is based upon the belief that the prior art of record fails to disclose or suggest temporarily overriding the content of a cell and recalculating the cell using a value instead of a cell's formula (page 10). The examiner again

Art Unit: 2178

respectfully disagrees. Sorge discloses temporarily overriding the formula so that the numerical value is used instead of the formula in calculations (column 4, lines 9-37).

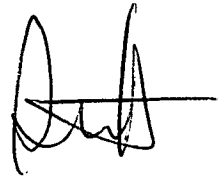
(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

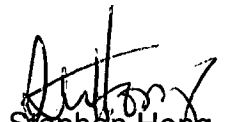
Respectfully submitted,


krs



STEPHEN HONG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Conferees:


Stephen Hong, SPE 2178

(For) 
Heather Herndon, SPE 2176
Doug Hutton
Primary Examiner
Technology Center 2100